

BOSTON RECORDER.

PUBLISHED BY NATHANIEL WILLIS, AT NO. 14, WATER-STREET, CORNER OF DEVONSHIRE STREET, BOSTON....TERMS, \$3 a year, or \$2 50 in advance....Five copies for \$10 in advance.

Vol. XVIII—No. 45.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 1833.

Whole No. 931.

RELIGIOUS.

Miscellany.

ETERNITY REALIZED.

Selected for the Boston Recorder, from "Eternity Realized; or A Guide to the Thoughtful." By Robert Phillips. Published by Perkins & Marvin.]

THOUGHTS ON ETERNITY A MEANS OF IMPROVEMENT.

As life involves thought, and feeling, and action; of every thing, thinking, an eternity of feeling, an eternity of acting, is a solemn consideration! It must not be weighed without profit. Who would not be improved, both in character and spirit, by training thus?—I must think forever; would an eternal train of my usual thoughts be either worthy of me, or useful to me? I must feel forever; would an eternal reign of my present spirit and distress please me? I must act forever; would an eternal course of my habitual conduct bring happiness, or even bear reflection?

We could not bring our tastes and tempers to this test, without improving both. The instant we realize an effect, we feel it, or we are shocked.

The eternally passionate, or eternally sensual, or eternally covetous, or eternally capricious, is a spirit of being which must be appalling and repulsive even to the victims of these vices. Thus, independent of all the light shed upon immortality, by the gospel, immortality itself sheds strong and steady lights upon our personal interests and relative duties.

WE ARE RELUCTANT TO THINK OF ETERNITY.

We see, at a glance, that an habitual sense of mortality would impose and compel more self-denial, self-control, or self-examination, than we altogether like. We feel instinctively, that certain tempers and tendencies, if not some habits also, would require great and immediate improvements, if they were confronted from day to day with the claims of Heaven. Every aspect of immortality is full of solemn protest against all compromises with the flesh and the world, that even the most exemplary cannot but see clearly, and feel deeply. They are not altogether that "manner of persons" which, as heirs of immortality, they ought to be.

"IT FASSETH KNOWLEDGE."

When Paul uttered this exclamation, and its emphatic disclaimments, he saw more of the wants and infelicities of man, and more of the works of self-chosen love than had ever seen before.

His mind was out amongst its immeasurable glories, as Newton's was abroad in the universe, when he said it was unsearchable. This, in Newton's lips, was not the language of ignorance, nor disappointment.

He saw the distant and dazzling points at which the universe became unsearchable; and never saw nor enjoyed so much, as when he thus felt, through all his soul, that it "passeth knowledge," like him, Paul saw the point of breadth, the point of length, the point of depth, the point of height, at which the love of Christ, like the spaces of infinity, surpasseth comprehension.

LUSTS OF THE MIND.

There are, however, "lusts of the mind," as well as lusts of the flesh; and the desire to reserve the great bulk of our spare time for thinking and speaking of earthly things, is one of these mortal lusts.

The desire to have things right between God and our consciences, without the trouble of keeping them right is another. Impatience to quit the closet is a third. Drawing in, or checking those lines of thought which lead direct to eternity, is a fourth.

PRAYER AND EXERTION.

He will pray most in secret, and with most ples-

sance whose closet is, as it were, a little nook of the seven of heavens, partitioned off for communion with God, and the exercise of freedom from the claims of eternity. And there is special

need, that the family alter should actually lean on an eternal throne; *there is such danger of human formal and dull in domestic worship!*

DEPARTED FRIENDS AND ETERNITY.

We cannot of course, regret, but must rejoice, that heaven comes before us not desolate of ancestral spirits. It is no small part of our happiness to believe, that some of those who were nearest and dearest to us on earth, are now before the throne; and even there continue to love us, and to long for us to join them. These are golden links between our hearts and heaven! and might be expected, as they are well calculated, to draw our thoughts and affections very often and very far heavenlyward.

And they have this sweet influence, whenever we allow them to exert it. It is, however, necessary to take care lest this ardent love to those who are "forever with the Lord," be mistaken for love to the Lord himself.

ETERNITY AND THE HOUSE OF MOENING.

We cannot force such glimpses of eternity, as the approach of death forces upon us. We cannot command that entire and intense concentration of spirit which God, which is so natural, though not necessarily so common, to the moment of death.

It is the office of the minister, and there is special

need, that the family alter should actually lean on an eternal throne; *there is such danger of human formal and dull in domestic worship!*

Farewell and Eternity.

When we come from such a scene to the first sacrament after it, this absorbing consciousness of immortality, although softened and tranquillized by the interval, is yet so vital and vivid, that it gives to that sacrament much of the aspect of a last hour. Deep thoughts of our own death, mingle with our sweetest recollections of the Saviour's death. We communicate for eternity. There is an air of eternity about the sanctuary, and about ourselves, too. Our sympathizing friends feel the "unction," as well as the weight, that is on our spirit. For it is not their sense of our loss alone, that so readily and fully harmonizes their looks and tones with ours.

In this meet us for the first time, after we come from the house of mourning to the house of God. That deep and solemn awe, which breathes in all their manner towards us, is chiefly derived from us. They feel that they have entered into the world, that any thing not solemn, would be as unkind to our serenity as to our sorrow. They know that we went so far down into the "swellings of Jordan," with the spirit which so recently passed through them, that they look as if they saw drops of the cold and dark waters still hanging upon us.

A SACRAMENTAL SPIRIT.

Why not, then, before taking our place at the table of the Lord, place ourselves in thought at the throne of the Lord, until we see and feel the kind of penitence, and the kind of humility, and the kind of gratitude, and the kind of love, which becomes those who take "the cup of blessing" on earth, as the pledge of "the cup of salvation" in heaven? No process nor direction of thought would so readily improve "a right spirit," or correct a wrong spirit. Indeed, it is only by some process akin to this, that we can succeed in securing a sacramental spirit: for it will not often bless you with his gifts or his good wishes.

I have taken up my pen to write these ministrations, not for the religious, but for the profane. I have

seen that some might feel themselves "particularly pointed at," although they may not be in my mind, and that some who are well qualified, may be deterred from engaging in an employment, which is indispensable to the welfare of the country and the world. Such an influence from my remarks, I should deeply deplore. I have often been called to act in the capacity of a solicitor of aid for divers charitable objects; and I am not ignorant of the difficulties which must be encountered, and the trials which must be endured, in this very necessary but very undesirable service. I am aware, that agents and collectors are entitled to a hearing. They can tell a tale, at which the ears of some should tingle. It is not seldom that the best of them have occasion for great forbearance. And with your leave, Mr. Editor, I will say something in your next paper, in behalf of their claims to courtesy and kindness.

CORNELIUS.

It often happens that members of a church who are dissatisfied with their pastor, instead of going to him with their complaints and difficulties, make them known to some neighboring minister, as if they would enliven his feelings in their grievances, and so be able to employ his influence in a party against their pastor. In a case of this kind something like the following dialogue occurred between a deacon of one church, and a minister of a neighboring parish at an accidental interview.

Deac. I have been thinking, Rev. Sir, for some time, that I should like to talk with you about our minister, and see what you think we had better do.

Mr. ——. There is no man in this country, who has not seen to go very well with us, and we do as if we needed different kind of preaching.

Min. Is the dissatisfaction general among the members of the church, or is it only with a few individuals?

Deac. I do not know how extensive it is; I have spoken to several about it, who seem to feel as I do.

Min. I hope you are not trying to excite uneasiness among the brethren.

Deac. What is the difficulty with your minister?

Min. Well, he is not bad, and say

he is at the Far-
John Hunt.

Mr. ——. There is no man in this country, who has not seen to go very well with us, and we do as if we needed different kind of preaching.

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